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Master's Thesis of the Department of Communication

The Role of Facebook in Romantic Relationships:

A Study of the Effects of *Facebook Official*
among Korean Young Adults

연인관계에서 페이스북의 역할:
FBO가 한국 청년들에게 미치는 영향을 중심으로

August 2016

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the possible psychological changes that can emerge when couples in a romantic relationship share SNS activities and publicly announce them to their respective networks. An online survey ($n = 517$) was conducted among young Korean adults currently in a romantic relationship. This study examined the Facebook use and the portrayals of their romantic relationship on their Facebook profile.

Previous research provides ample evidence that the use of Facebook can change the satisfaction levels of relationships. This study specifically focuses on the importance of *Facebook official* (FBO) — officially announcing a romantic relationship online — in making differences in relationship satisfaction by investigating the amount of romantic relationship information couples publicize on Facebook and the level of between-couple equality in publication.

Results showed that both men and women who were publicly going FBO generally experienced a higher relationship satisfaction than those who were not. Gender differences were detected in the level of satisfaction when publicizing romantic relationship status on Facebook. Generally men experienced higher relationship satisfaction than women when publicizing their romantic relationship status online. Men also displayed higher levels of satisfaction when their degree of participation in publicizing romantic relationship on Facebook increased. For women, this factor was not strong enough to alter their overall relationship satisfaction. Lastly, level of equality in Facebook participation positively affected the relationship satisfaction among men. However, for women, again, this did not affect their relationship satisfaction level. Implications of these findings were discussed.

Keywords : SNS, Facebook, Gender, Romantic relationship, Satisfaction, Facebook Official, Degree of Participation, Romantic relationship information, Equal participation

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of Research & Study Background

The use of Social Networking Services (SNSs) has been growing continuously among young adults and has affected the relationship between lovers. Although it is certain that SNSs play an important role in romantic relationships, limited research has been conducted in this area. The background research of SNSs and its psychological effect on couples is very limited in depth and diversity. There is still little information on how romantic relationships are controlled and displayed online and how this affects the motives of the users and their relationship satisfaction.

This paper looks at lovers announcing their romantic relationship status on Facebook or going *Facebook Official* online and how this affects their overall relationship satisfaction. This study focuses on, first, researching if there are any gender differences in the satisfaction level changes. Secondly, if and how much information couples share about their relationship online affects their satisfaction. It was measured by evaluating both sides of public disclosure: one's amount of romantic relationship information (RRI) disclosure online and the other partner's amount of romantic relationship information (PRRI) disclosure online. They were then evaluated separately and compared together to see if there were any satisfaction level changes when RRI and PRRI were equal or unequal. In order to address this idea, an online survey was conducted with young adults in South Korea. Results revealed significant outcomes in the differences in satisfaction changes of romantic relationships according to gender. These effects were significant in that it eventually influenced the overall perception of SNSs as well as the development of the overall relationship — offline and online.

Previous research has found that monitoring and editing personal information on Facebook increases the self-esteem of individuals, increases and decreases satisfaction levels of relationships, and improves offline relationship closeness (Papp, Danielewicz, & Cayemberg, 2012). To date, research has focused on the communication and connection of relationships via SNSs and how this affects or improves the overall relationship offline (Papp et al., 2012). Current study examines the connection between the use of Facebook and personal levels of satisfaction outcomes with a sample of Korean young adults involved in a romantic relationship.

Fox and Warber (2013) reported that going FBO, to couples, is not simply an indication of "going steady" but openly announcing their relationship to all members of their respective network. Thus, it is possible that this action might have more influence on their relationship than any other decision making processes in relationship developments (Fox & Warber, 2013). This research aims to clarify the link between the use of social media and its effects on relationship intimacy. Specifically, this study will look at the effects of *Facebook Official* (FBO) on the satisfaction levels of partners.

Facebook

For the last five decades, researchers have spent a significant amount of time studying the factors that affect romantic relationships (Fox, Osborn, & Warber, 2014). An area that has been greatly understudied is the influence of technologies that are widely used as communicative methods in romantic relationships (Fox et al., 2014). Among these technologies, the most prevalent one has become the social networking services (SNSs). One significant social networking service (SNS) that is globally and widely used is

Facebook. Facebook has become one of the most widely used SNS containing over 1 billion active users worldwide (Edison Research, 2010). Among the active users in the United States, 74% are reported to be aged 12–24 years (Edison Research, 2010). Recently, Facebook has experienced a notable escalation of use. Nearly half of its users reported to visit the website at least six days a week (Facebook, 2013; Fox, Warber, & Makstaller, 2012). Most of these users were college students and their average use of Facebook a day was 1–2 hours (Fox et al., 2014). Therefore, it is not too surprising to assume that SNSs play a compelling role in the interactions of relationships and the overall development of relationships (Fox et al., 2014).

Facebook enables users to upload pictures, post comments, and even publicly announce romantic relationships for viewing either publicly or to everyone listed as "friends" in their Facebook network. Facebook's unique affordance helps users to easily post about their relationships online and share issues about their private lives to a wider audience than previous face-to-face communication. Before the appearance of SNSs, friends or acquaintances living in other locations were unable to know if two people were romantically involved unless an actual or direct encounter had occurred. However, according to recent studies of college students, now in a brief instant, over 200 to 250 friends can know whether or not two people are involved in a romantic relationship (Fox & Warber, 2013). Facebook has enabled couples to publicly announce their relationship and practically all other aspects of their lives to a much wider audience at a blink of an eye (Fox et al., 2014). This behavior has the potential to significantly shift the romantic relational processes (Fox et al., 2014).

Given the Facebook's influence on relationship development and interpersonal communication, it is essential to investigate deeper into its role in romantic relationships. However, despite the flourishing influence of online social interaction, research has yet to

reach the potential connotation of how our romantic relationships develop both online and offline (Fox et al., 2012).

Facebook official

Facebook has created a powerful innovation as to how romantic relationship status is transferred and conveyed through the SNS (Fox & Warber, 2013). Facebook enables users to indicate their romantic partner and publicly link him or her on their own profile. Thus, being "In a Relationship" on Facebook with another individual is publicly listing and announcing his or her name in one's own profile. Again, this is referred to as going *Facebook Official* or FBO (Fox et al., 2012). To illustrate, when a person named Sue is trying to go FBO with her partner, rather than just listing her status as "In a Relationship," Facebook enables Sue's relational status to be "In a Relationship with Thomas Smith." Once this is done, Sue's profile will provide a link to Thomas Smith's profile, which will also read "In a Relationship with Sue Ahn" and, also, provide a link to Sue's profile (Fox et al., 2012).

Fox et al. (2014) reported that going FBO is often seen as a significant turn in a romantic relationship because in-depth communication and mutual agreement is required for couples to reach this stage. As simple as it sounds, the conversations and agreements couples experience before going FBO is a complex meaning-making act (Fox et al., 2014) which conveys multiple meanings to their relationship and their network.

There are several reasons as to why couples decide to publicly identify and announce their relationship as FBO. According to Fox et al. (2012), several reasons include "to show their commitment to their current relationship", "to publicly show their happiness," or "to evoke jealousy among others". They reported that about 77 percent

of participants reported of going FBO at some point of their romantic relationships. Most participants agreed that going FBO to couples meant that the two individuals were exclusively dating and, thus, "off the market". In other words, going FBO meant that the relationship has developed and become steady. Similar claims have been made by Fox et al. (2012). They explain this public declaration in terms of the Knapp's relational stage model (1978). Going FBO represents a bold announcement in view of the *integrating* stage of the relationship as elaborated in Knapp's relational stage model (Fox et al., 2012). According to Knapp (1978), the *integrating* stage is when partners start to publicly share a relational identity. In this stage, couples focus on the connectedness of the relationship rather than the social norms. Also, partners create an interdependent relational identity by indicating their relationship as "we" or "us" (Fox et al., 2012; Knapp & Vangelisti, 2009; Shea & Pearson, 1986). Thus, when two partners go FBO, this is an indication of "moving a step up" by sharing a public relational identity in their relationship (Fox et al., 2012).

1.2. Research Question and Hypotheses

In this research, the questions of what going FBO means to Korean young adults and if there is any gender differences in perception are investigated. To find out how this affects or alters their overall romantic relationship satisfaction, the following research hypotheses and question are tested:

Hypothesis 1–1.

FBO male group will perceive higher relationship satisfaction than non–FBO male group.

Hypothesis 1–2.

FBO female group will perceive higher relationship satisfaction than non–FBO female group.

Research Question.

Are there sex differences in the perception of relationship satisfaction when couples go FBO?

Hypothesis 2–1.

FBO male group will perceive higher relationship satisfaction when they publicize more RRI on Facebook.

Hypothesis 2–2.

FBO female group will perceive higher relationship satisfaction when they publicize more RRI on Facebook.

Hypothesis 3–1.

FBO male group will perceive higher romantic relationship satisfaction when both partners in the relationship participate equally in the activities on Facebook than when their participation is unequal.

Hypothesis 3–2.

FBO female group will perceive higher romantic relationship satisfaction when both partners in the relationship participate equally in the activities on Facebook than when their participation is unequal.

Chapter 2. Theoretical Backgrounds

2.1. Uses and gratification theory

The uses and gratification theory, formulated by Blumler and Katz (1974) in the 1970s, stresses the importance of active audience and users (Katz & Blumber, 1974). In other words, it focuses on the audience's perceived needs or motives for the usage of media. Based on their needs and motives, the audiences are supposed to actively seek and use media. Blumler and Katz (1974) believed that people do not use the mass media in a passive way. Instead, they believed that there are numerous reasons why people seek and use media. This process depends on the context and the needs of the individual. They (1974) stated that individuals mix and match their media uses with their goals. Thus, individuals become an active audience.

To understand uses and gratification approach, a detailed comprehension of media user's psychological orientation — needs, motives, and gratification — is needed. Uses and gratification approach attempts to explain the different uses and the multiple functions media play. There are three key tasks of the uses and gratification theory: First, it tries to explain how individuals use the media to meet their needs (Shao, 2009). Secondly, it tries to discover the reasons or motives behind people's uses of media. And lastly, it aims to identify the multiple consequences of media use (Leung & Wei, 2000).

The core of the uses and gratification theory lies in the assumption that media users actively seek the mass media to satisfy their needs rather than passively accepting the information given from the media. This theory, thus, is contrary to the magic bullet theory which describes the users as passive audiences. According to the uses and gratification perspective, the needs and

gratification of individuals can, at large, be categorized into five separate categories: personal integrative needs, tension attenuation needs, affective needs, cognitive needs, and social integrative needs (Shao, 2009).

Personal integrative need is related to the users' self-esteem. People often use the media to bolster their social status and gain recognition. Tension attenuation need is the need for escapism and relief of stress. Affective needs refer to emotional needs users seek to satisfy via the media. For example, individuals select and watch melodramatic soap operas in order to become emotional or feel pleasure. Cognitive needs refer to the use of media in order to acquire knowledge and information. This includes watching the news on the television to acquire information about the society or surfing on the internet for advice. Last, social integrative needs contain the need for socializing with friends, family, and partners in romantic relationships via the media. Individuals nowadays tend to spend more time socializing via SNSs such as Facebook, rather than meeting others offline, to satisfy their needs.

Uses and gratification theory has been used in various research about the web. It has been applied to studies of internet blogs, instant messengers, and social networking sites. It assumes that those who do not use the media do not feel the need to use it, and when people use the media, they select that specific media due to specific purposes. Thus, those who select media and use it tend to place a greater significance on it (Johnstone, 1974; Chen, 2011). Weibull (1985) argued that individuals use media in order to satisfy their needs and thus reinforces the individual's need to use the media repeatedly. This process makes media usage a habitual activity (Weibull, 1985).

There are two distinct categories of media gratification (Cutler & Danowski, 1980). The first comes from the gratification an individual receives via the information gained from the media

(content gratification). And the second comes from the gratification an individual gains via the experience of using the media itself (process gratification). Murray (1953) and Maslow (1987) both indicated the importance of the need to affiliate and feel a sense of belonging that connects to the reason why so many individuals keep coming back to social media such as the SNS. Thus, it can be assumed that for SNS use, the strongest gratification that is satisfied via using it is connection building.

According to the type of audience, the level of participation in SNS activities may vary. Also, differences in media consumption may arise depending on each individual's rational decision making (Rubin, 1993). For example, some media may attract more passive users than others (Blumler, 1979). It is important to recognize that internet use has overridden the traditional sender-and-receiver communication model. Now, people can choose what media they want to use and through a simple click, they can simultaneously send and receive information (Chen, 2011). Thus, internet use has become more relevant to the uses and gratification theory (Ko, 2000). The active audience can now be newly termed as active users (Chen, 2011).

Thanks to its ever-growing audience and increasing popularity, user-generated media (UGM) such as YouTube, MySpace, or Facebook have increasingly developed over the past several years (Shao, 2009). Back in the 1990s, UGMs started off as simple portal sites such as Yahoo and AOL. Over time UGMs have evolved as blogs, social networking sites, wikis, and other sharing user-generated web sites (Shao, 2009). According to Shao (2009), UGM can be defined as: a new media in which the content of it is publicized and made available to the public online.

Shao (2009) claims that individuals use the UGM for many different reasons and in many different ways. At large, users use UGM by consuming, participating, and producing (Ng, 2016). When

users use UGM for consuming, they only watch and read the information via the media and never participate (Shao, 2009). Participating takes place when users anticipate in user-to-user interaction or user-to-content interaction such as sharing posts on their blogs or posting comments on others' pictures (Shao, 2009). Participating does not refer to the users actively creating new products. Producing refers to creation and publication of user's personal contents such as writing about their private lives, posting personal pictures, or uploading videos (Shao, 2009). Thus, Shao (2009) states that the different uses of media are driven by the different motives of the users. The important question here is for what reasons users choose to use UGM and what gratifications they expect from using it.

Some common user-to-content motives of user's using SNSs is to seek for information and entertainment (Graber, 1993; Kats, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974; Korgaonakr & Wolin, 1999; McQuail, 1983, 2000; Zillmann & Bryant, 1985; Shao, 2009). This can help us better understand user's general media consumption of UGMs (Shao, 2009). Also, user-to-user interaction occurs when users interact with others via the message boards online or instant messages (Shao, 2009). This is a more direct way for users to achieve their social integrative needs. SNSs have attracted millions of young adults in the sense that they can take on an active role in creating a new public environment on the internet. According to Haythornthwaite (2005), what makes SNS unique is not in its ability to form a space to meet new people and connect with strangers in a public space. Most SNS users do not create a new network and develop a conversation with others they do not know; rather they use the public space in building stronger bonds with existing relationships and develop better social networks (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Urista, Dong, & Day, 2009).

Many scholars have used the uses and gratification theory to answer the questions of why so many people today use social media

(Smock, Ellison, Lampe, & Wohn, 2011). Lampe, Wash, Velasquez, and Ozkaya (2010) used the uses and gratification theory to explain the motives behind online communities and differences in contributions made by different members. Also, other researchers have used the uses and gratification theory to better comprehend how much users expect to fulfill their needs via Facebook use. Papacharissi and Mendelson (2007) stated nine different motives as to why people use Facebook: usual pass time, entertainment, information sharing, new trend, avoidance from reality, accompaniment, growth in skill, social communication, and new relationship (Smock et al., 2011). Beyond just describing the reasons why people use Facebook, Joinson (2008) explained some reasons why people frequently log into Facebook. Many users were logging into Facebook in order to post or look at photos, to find out information about others, and to upload status updates. Thus, this research provided further explanation as to why people spend a lot of time on Facebook these days.

Facebook, as mentioned earlier, is a combination of many different tools. It allows many different activities to be performed in the same platform. Thus, although it is important to understand the underlying motives as to why users select a specific media, it is also important to comprehend the motives of users who select a specific content in a given medium (Smock et al., 2011). In other words, when we analyze the motives of users selecting Facebook as their SNS, it is particularly important to investigate what content they are reaching for in the Facebook platform. This is important because the user's perception of the tools available in a specific medium will affect the users' choice in media (Daft, Lengel, & Trevino, 1987).

Facebook has various features or tools that help users navigate their way into fulfilling what they want or need. These various features are the many technical tools that allow users to perform activities in Facebook such as wall posts, status updates, tags,

comments, and likes (Smock et al., 2011). Wall posts are all contents including messages, photos, or videos that are shared on the user's own Facebook page — also visible to their friends via News Feed. Status updates are short messages users post on their own Facebook page which can be visible to their friends to via News Feed. Tags are features that let users link themselves and others to a specific place or a content (photos, videos, or messages). Once the user tags oneself on a specific content, Facebook automatically links the user and the content together. Comments can be made to any contents that are shared publicly via the owner. Likes are features that users can click to show interest. Like features are available in all public contents inside the Facebook platform.

2.2. Uses and gratifications on Facebook Relationships

Several scholars have argued that the use of social media does not escalate the bond of relationships or, in that sense, create meaningful relationships (Beniger, 1988; Stoll & Hildenbrand, 1996; Shao, 2009). However, positive perspectives show that, due to the interaction with others on the SNS, users can experience lower levels of depression, isolation, and loneliness and feel higher levels of self-worth and acceptance by others (Shao, 2009). This sheds light on future research to seek for better understandings of social interaction on SNSs and why it yields positive effects to individuals.

These positive effects can also be observed in romantic relationships. According to Fox and Warber (2013) there are several common motives as to why couples in a romantic relationship publicly go FBO and announce their relationship by posting pictures and writing on each other's wall. These motives, such as expressions of commitment and relationship satisfaction, are derived from the needs of the relationship itself and the core reason why couples initiate FBO and openly announce their relationship to

a wider audience in the first place. When this is satisfied, we can predict that the partners will experience gratification and will seek for it again.

The public declarations made on Facebook can be viewed by anyone inside the social network (Fox et al., 2012). Thus, Facebook becomes a public announcement board for couples involved in a romantic relationship. This requires a lot of decision making and interaction between the partners. Also, it helps the relationship between couples grow and develop by receiving public feedback and acknowledgement.

2.3. SNSs and romantic relationships

As previously noted, social networking sites (SNSs) enable users to create their own profile, connect with their friends, and observe different people in different networks via linked users (Papacharissi, 2011). SNSs have special features that help users perform specific actions within the site (Treem & Leonardi, 2012). No matter how distant, it enables users to connect with others and recognize each other (Fox et al., 2014).

Previous research have shown that SNSs can increase the bridging of relationships and, when heightened, can lead to stronger bonding capital (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007; Steinfield, Ellison, & Lampe, 2008; Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009; Utz & Beukeboom, 2011). Zhao, Grasmuck, and Martin (2008) stated that users express their affection to their loved ones via their Facebook profiles. Utz and Beukeboom (2011) showed that these public affections are usually seen positively by partners. Mod (2010) reported similar results as well.

Utz and Beukeboom (2011) claimed that SNSs have the potential to alter perceived relationship satisfactions and happiness

levels. This is mainly due to the fact that SNSs allow individuals to publicly demonstrate their affections and commitment to their relationship. To illustrate, Facebook can be used to display certain indications of romantic relationship commitment of another by setting the relationship status to "In a Relationship." Although significant amount of research has addressed the various uses and effects of Facebook and its unique affordances, not much research has analyzed the implications of this new platform and its effects on romantic relationships.

Utz and Beukeboom (2011) examined whether the use of SNS has positive effects on the overall relationship development of romantic relationships. To examine this, they created a scale called SNS relationship happiness, which is similar to the Facebook jealousy scale developed by Muise, Christofides, and Desmarais (2009). The SNS relationship happiness scale was created to measure the level of happiness people experience when their partners publicly display certain pictures or messages of his or her partner on their online profile page. Consequently, they found that relationship satisfaction is positively related to SNS relationship happiness. However, since their research was based on a sample lacked in diversity, if a more diverse sample is available, it can be argued that more detailed and in-depth of investigation of SNS relationship satisfaction can be achieved (Utz & Beukeboom, 2011).

Papp et al. (2012) reported that by going FBO, individuals experienced higher levels of relationship satisfaction. Both partners reported a positive increase in relationship satisfaction when they displayed their relationship status as "partnered" (Papp et al., 2012). These results support the predictions of Utz and Beukeboom (2011), that by publicly announcing the relationship status on Facebook, the relational satisfaction can be positively affected. However, their sample was strictly limited to couples who were currently going FBO.

2.4. Romantic relationship satisfaction

Satisfaction is a regularly studied relational feature (Lewis & Spanier, 1979; Stafford & Canary, 1991). From a social exchange perspective, a satisfactory relationship would be one that has equal amount of rewards compared to the cost of efforts to maintain the relationship (Kelly & Thibaut, 1978; Stafford & Canary, 1991). High level of satisfaction from relationship tends to generate a good and stable relationship and is essential for maintaining a relationship (Stafford & Canary, 1991). Dindia (1989) found that one's romantic relationship satisfaction was positively related to the level of romantic affections one's partner conveyed (Stafford & Canary, 1991). Among these, one important factor often looked at is verbal communication (Sargent, 2002). Many romantically involved couples experience challenges and conflicts while maintaining and developing their relationships. Many researchers claim that couples can solve these issues by verbally communicating more often and that increase in communication will help develop a more satisfying relationship (Sargent, 2002).

In relation to this, prior research has closely investigated into how openness to information and relationship satisfaction are connected (Bochner, 1982; Crohan, 1992). Prior research has found that rather than complete openness of information, management in private information disclosure leads to higher relationship satisfaction (Baxter, 1988; Petronio, 1991; Sargent, 2002). To explain, those who create relational boundaries, and disclose information according to them, often open-up more positive information and avoid negative topics (Freedman, 1978; Klinger, 1977). When romantic partners choose to selectively communicate information, it can lead to a more amicable and balanced relationship than complete openness of information (Bienvenu, 1970). Thus, a well-balanced communication and openness to information can lead to higher satisfaction in romantic relationships.

However, some researchers claim otherwise. According to Sargent (2002), people want their partners to be more honest about themselves while communicating with them. In spite of the many discomforting information, they preferred their partners to be more opened about their information and believe this resulted in a more satisfying relationship. Couples felt a higher increase in relationship satisfaction when more verbal communication was created (Sargent, 2002). Also, more openness to information was considered to be a part of relationship maintenance (Sargent, 2002).

Another important factor is the culture of South Korea and how this affects what one desires in a romantic relationship and how it affects the overall relationship satisfaction. Han and Shin (2006), created a scale that measured the psychological desire of couples in a relationship called Basic Psychological Needs Importance Scale for Couples (BPNIS–Couple). According to them, Korean college students who were in a romantic relationship stated that the most important relational factor that controlled their romantic relationship satisfaction was the "desire to be loved."

They also found conflicting results among gender and satisfaction to existing theories. Previous theories state that women are more relation oriented and have a stronger desire for mutual dependence than men (Helgeson, 1994; Kashima et al., 1995; Prager & Buhrmester, 1998; Wood, Rhodes, & Whelan, 1989). However, according to Han and Shin (2007), their survey results showed that Korean women had a stronger desire for autonomy and competence than their desire for mutual dependence. This may be explained as a cultural difference or another type of gender differences based on a more complex psychological desire.

For example, Acitelli and Young (1996) claimed that wives tend to think of relational problems in a much complex way and consider it with much thought than their husbands. Christenson and Heavey (1990) found out that women tend to put more effort into relational

promotion than men. Thus, women feel a stronger sense of responsibility when it comes to romantic relationships and perceive it as a more important factor than men. For this reason, women may experience a stronger desire for relationship satisfaction when they are committed in a romantic relationship and, thus, their basic need of psychological satisfaction may be higher than those of men (Han & Shin, 2007).

2.5. Gender and romantic relationship on Facebook

Fox et al. (2012) stated that there is a common understanding about going FBO. Both male and female agreed that deciding whether or not a couple is going to go FBO is a big step in a relationship (Fox et al., 2012). Therefore, they must have enough conversation and think seriously about defining themselves as FBO. Going FBO doesn't simply have significant meaning online but to their offline relationship as well. Due to this standard and added pressure of going FBO, it is almost unavoidable for couples to discuss about the status and their expectations about the relationship (Fox et al., 2012). This discourse between couples about whether to go FBO or not precisely address the uncertainty of the relationship; since FBO status instantly elicits a label and announces to the public that they are in a serious relationship (Fox et al., 2012).

Studies have reported that men and women recognize romantic relationships differently. They also create distinct goals in maintaining them. According to Fox and Warber (2013), there are sociobiological differences between men and women that have evolved from the past. They state that male and female have evolved differently due to the differencing pressures related to fortunate mating and successful continuity of their species. In a biological viewpoint, females hold power to create offspring. Males, on the other hand, lack the power to create and develop offspring.

This leads females to have more control over mate selection than males. Males, who are less selective, thus seek multiple mates to maximize the possibility of their gene to survive and develop (Fox & Warber, 2013). These differences in the needs of relationship, in combination with the current cultural needs, create different reasons and goals for romantic relationships among men and women. Although both male and female seek for long and short term relationships, young adult females place higher importance on commitment and emotional closeness than men (Fox & Warber, 2013; Fuhrman, Flannagan, & Matamoros, 2009). Therefore, it can be said that women feel a stronger need in securing a steady relationship and eliminating third-party threats to a relationship. Women will have a stronger need in publicly advertising the relationship to show other women that her man is "taken" (Fox & Warber, 2013; Rusbult & Buunk, 1993).

According to these studies, since going FBO means placing a significant label to the relationship, women will want to go FBO to secure the relationship. On the other hand, because men tend to desire to have a larger number of romantic partners, it can be predicted that they will be less interested in or resist in going FBO and publicly announce that they are in a committed relationship with one partner since this will significantly reduce potential number of sexual partners (Robert, 1972; Buss, 2003; Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Fox & Warber, 2013). These differences in perceptions of going FBO were also shown from the feedback of others. Young adult males reported that they received negative feedback from male friends when they went FBO but young adult females reported differently (Fox & Warber, 2013). They stated that they received positive feedback from their female friends after going FBO. However, in some cases, men also do feel the need to go FBO with their romantic partner for several reasons. They might feel the need to eliminate other third-party threats or secure a more steady relationship (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Fox & Warber, 2013).

However, an opposing view has been suggested by past research on the differences of gender and relationship. Contrary to cultural stereotypes, it has been claimed that men tend to be more romantic than women (Frazier & Esterly, 1990). To illustrate, men tend to score higher on scales that assess romantic beliefs, such as "love happens without warning", or "it comes once, and lasts forever" (Dion & Dion, 1975; Frazier & Esterly, 1990; Knox & Sparakowski, 1968). However, women tend to be more sensible in their beliefs about romantic relationships (Frazier & Esterly, 1990). They believe that romance is a slowly developing process and perceive romance as being more complex than love at first sight. Also, men tend to be more romantic and sentimental in the sense that they quickly fall in love and tend to see their relationship in a more simplistic way than women (Frazier & Esterly, 1990; Hill, Rubin, & Peplau, 1976; Rubin, Peplau, & Hill, 1981).

Several researchers have found out that putting a label on a relationship can mean distinct things to each partner. It, thus, can cause negative relationship problems (Papp et al., 2012; Fox et al., 2012). Fox and Warber (2013) identified some common social beliefs, men and women have, in the meaning of FBO such as intensity, social response, commitment, and other interpersonal motives for publicly disclosing their relationship on Facebook. However, they concluded that women and men hold different levels of belief about going FBO.

According to Fox and Warber (2013), when a partner agrees to go FBO, women take this as a sign of exclusivity and commitment of relationship. They identified that women felt the FBO status conveyed more intensity and commitment than men did. In other words, women believed that FBO status indicated exclusivity and seriousness of the relationship more strongly than men. Also, they thought that FBO status generated more attention from their social network than men did (Fox & Warber, 2013). However, men can take this as a sign to secure a safe relationship with one woman and

move on to seek other relationships. They explain that this is largely due to the fact that men place lower importance in going FBO than women (Fox & Warber, 2013).

Although various research has examined the differences in the motives and needs that men and women possess about going FBO, specific indications of differences between the satisfaction levels between men and women are yet to be studied. Previous research has focused greatly on the different psychological perceptions and behaviors of men and women. They mostly measured the different levels of intensity and belief of going FBO and have been biased to the fact that women are more sensitive to the changes of FBO. Also, existing research has been lopsided to understanding the level of psychological differences of men and women when they go FBO and lack in the understanding of differences they might have and why. In light of the previous findings, we plan to create a research question that can address these general differences between men and women.

2.6. Degree of Participation (production) on Facebook

Recent research has noted on the sharp escalation of posting comments and pictures on their own UGMs, such as Facebook profiles, to communicate with others and share their interests. These actions are deeply rooted in the user's motives to socially interact with others (Shao, 2009). As stated before, Facebook contains various social interaction services such as enabling users to upload pictures, post comments, tag others, and write to one another. Facebook's broad range of affordance assists users to conveniently post about their private lives online and share their interests to a wider audience than previous face-to-face communication. Like the effect of monitoring behavior, which relates positively to relationship jealousy (Utz & Beukeboom, 2011), various relational effects can arise from the activities of publicizing

information and participating actively on Facebook. These activities, other than going FBO, can positively or negatively affect the overall romantic relationship satisfaction.

Christofides, Muise, and Desmarais (2009) state that disclosing information is an important part of maintaining relationships. The key elements in the lives of young adults are the need to be a part of a social community and the need for popularity (Christofides et al., 2009). So, it is not surprising that for college students, having a close relationship and getting positive feedback about their postings on Facebook from friends is an important aspect of their lives (Christofides et al., 2009). Thus, individuals participate actively on Facebook to satisfy their need for stronger ties in relationships and receive recognition from others.

Research has shown that, in online communication, stronger reciprocal relationships are built under trust and self-disclosure (Henderson & Gilding, 2004). As the information of disclosure increases online, the notion of trustworthiness and mutual disclosure increases between the person disclosing the information and the other (Christofides, 2009). Andon (2007) states that, in terms of interpersonal relationships, Facebook allows a variety of information-gathering and sharing among each other. Facebook activities include posting information about the likes and dislikes, showing writings that publicly announce personality, announcing current dating status, or posting private pictures (Andon, 2007). Thus, when an individual discloses information online, this activity relates closely to the need for social interaction between others and need for acknowledgement. Feelings of proximity and connectedness are the core of social integrative needs (Andon, 2007). While face-to-face interactions require physical presence, computer mediated communication allows individuals to control and take part in a variety of activities to satisfy this need (Andon, 2007). Thus, individuals take part in this activity and actively participate in disclosing personal information—which are mostly

positive—to form stronger relationships and acquire satisfaction through it.

Publicizing information about one's romantic relationship is also a part of self-disclosure. This is usually done under the agreement of both partners involved in the relationship; but both parties need to respectively self-disclose personal relationship information to their social network. Actively disclosing information about one's romantic relationship is also an act derived from the need for stronger ties in relationships and acknowledgement from others (Christofides et al., 2009). Thus, after couples go FBO—which is one form of self-disclosure—additional information about their relationship can be disclosed for the need for romantic relationship acknowledgement and satisfaction. This act can involve posting pictures taken together or writing intimate posts on each other's wall on Facebook.

Prior research states that a variety of activities performed on Facebook is more important than time spent on Facebook (Utz & Beukeboom, 2011). In other words, when partners spend a lot of time on Facebook but do not participate in any activities, the overall perceived relationship satisfaction does not tend to change much (Utz & Beukeboom, 2011). The change in satisfaction levels will occur when partners frequently browse on Facebook and also perform various activities in relation to the romantic relationship.

Stafford and Canary (1991) emphasize the importance of relationship maintenance among couples. They recognize the difference in the use of maintenance behaviors among men and women. They claim that females use maintenance behaviors more often than males. Among married couples, wives tend to use romantic approaches, such as verbal affections, to their husbands in order to maintain a more satisfying relationship (Dindia, 1989; Stafford & Canary, 1991). Other research found out that women tend to be more verbal when trying to solve relational issues than

men (Rusbult, Johnson, & Morrow, 1986). Burgoon (1985) also stated that females also respond strongly to non-verbal affections than males. However, other researchers have reported that males and females use and respond to maintenance strategies similarly, without much difference (Baxter & Dindia, 1990).

In general, research suggests that females tend to use verbal (and non-verbal) strategies to maintain or sustain a more satisfying relationship with their partners. It is possible that since females tend to be more sensitive and verbal than males, their behavioral expectations and standards are higher than those of males (Eagly & Steffen, 1984). Thus, these higher levels of expectations will eventually affect the perceptions of their male partners (Deaux & Major, 1987; Stafford & Canary, 1991). All in all, it is important to note that females use and respond to verbal (and non-verbal) affections strongly and they associate this to their overall relationship satisfaction. Men, on the other hand, will also be affected by this affectionate behavior because data indicate that positive maintenance behaviors of their partner increase one's relationship satisfaction level (Dindia, 1989; Stafford & Canary, 1991).

These verbal affections and strategies that are used to maintain or sustain a satisfying relationship can be linked to various Facebook activities that are performed and publicized in relation to romantic relationships. The degree of publicizing relationship information on Facebook refers to the number of romantic relationship information a partner publicizes on their profile. Possible information publicity on Facebook includes uploading pictures taken with their partners, writing on walls of each other, writing about the romantic partner on their own profile page, tagging the partner on a post, and liking the partner's post. Here, an important factor is *how much* activity one conducts on Facebook. This research will include the factor of quantity of information partners publicize on Facebook and how this aspect is related to

going FBO and the overall satisfaction of the relationship.

2.7. Equal Participation (production) on Facebook

According to Papp et al. (2012), romantic partners tend to demonstrate similar patterns of activities offline, such as leisure activities or behaviors (Houts, Robins, & Huston, 1996). Past research suggests that couples who show similar patterns of behaviors or demonstrate similar amount of the same activities have a higher chance in experiencing a more satisfying relationship than those who do not (Huston, Surra, Fitzgerald, & Cate, 1981). To explain, Houts et al. (1996) argued that individuals tend to find partners who possess similar characteristics of their own. They stated that when individuals select a mate, they evaluate the partner's characteristics and judge them by matching their attributes with their own. When the characteristics of the partner are observed to be similar to their own, they tend to choose that partner as their lover (Houts et al., 1996).

When more qualities of the partner are found similar or compatible to their own, higher levels of feelings of satisfaction will be experienced in the relationship (Houts et al., 1996). Thus, when the female partner frequently participates in leisure activities online such as posting pictures taken on her Facebook page, she will feel higher levels of compatibility and a stronger bond with a male partner who also posts a lot of pictures online. These similarities in behaviors relate to the connectedness of the relationship and a steady courtship (Houts et al., 1996). Therefore, similarity in interest and participation in activities are the key factors that relate directly to romantic relationship happiness.

According to Levinger and Rands's (1985) analysis of romantic partner's compatibility, social similarities such as ethnicity or religion do not relate strongly to the satisfaction or compatibility of

the relationship. That is to say, the differences in physical attributes do not have a strong relation to perceived harmony of the romantic relationship. They state that, in romantic relationships, most attention is held in the everyday activities and attitudes of the partners (Levinger & Rands, 1985). In other words, the similarity in level of participation in offline and online activities will determine the mutual satisfaction of the bond.

Another perspective, according to Houts et al. (1996), predicts that couples who do not have similar patterns of behaviors can still feel a strong bond when they are inclined to act or participate in similar ways. Some individuals are willing to adjust and match to their partner's activities and behaviors. This adjustment activity is performed to please themselves and their partners. This type of compatibility in relationship is created when the perceived ratio of reward is bigger than the punishment (Houts et al., 1996).

On the other hand, less well matched couples who are not willing to try, in relation to leisure activities, can start and get involved in a romantic relationship; but, they will be expected to experience negative or discordant feelings about the relationship (Houts et al., 1996). This situation of discordance will, in turn, result in more hesitation of commitment of the relationship and less effort in trying to enhance the relationship (Houts et al., 1996). However, research in this area is very limited (Papp et al., 2012). Therefore, in addition to the level of Facebook activities, the level of similarity in use between couples should be investigated further.

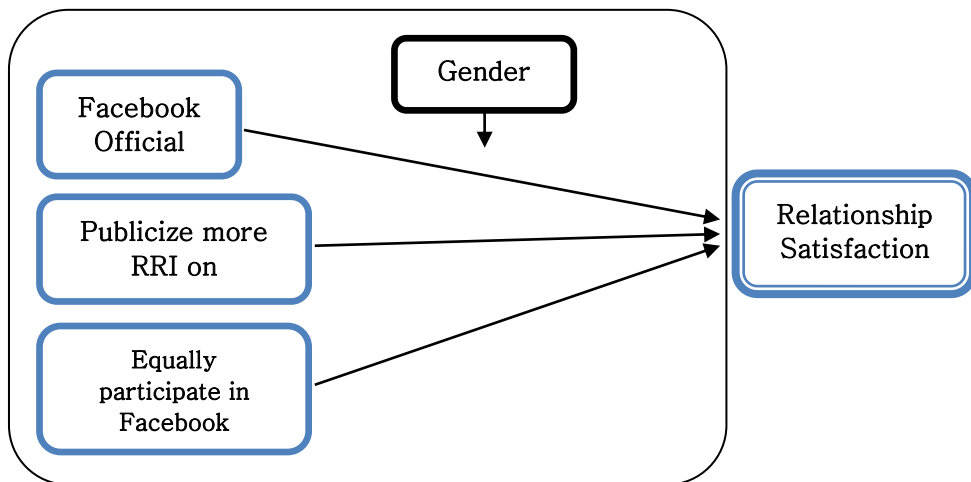
Equal participation on Facebook refers to the couple's similarity of participation in Facebook activities. While one can always log on Facebook and upload lots of pictures and messages about his or her partner, since the foundation of a romantic relationship is built through dyadic and reciprocal interaction, if both partners do not participate and publicize equally in Facebook activities, the relationship satisfaction level can alter. Participation levels on

Facebook relate to the same amount of time and effort partners spend on Facebook. Thus, this factor will also be studied in this research in relation to couples going FBO.

Chapter 3. Research Question and Hypotheses

3.1. Model of Research

In line with previous discussions, it can be predicted that going FBO will affect the overall relationship satisfaction of couples and that there will be gender differences in satisfaction levels. Moreover, how much relationship information couples publicize on Facebook and the equality of Facebook activity participation will affect their overall relationship satisfaction as well. The model of research is as follows:



<Figure 1> Model of Research

3.2. Research Question and Hypotheses

In light of previous discussions, the following research hypotheses can be suggested. Those who are going FBO will be indicated as FBO group while those who are not going FBO will be referred to as non-FBO group, hereafter.

As already explained, there is a common understanding about going FBO. Deciding to go FBO for both male and female is a big step in their romantic relationship (Fox et al., 2012). Therefore, both men and women who agree to go FBO together will perceive a development in relationship, leading to more positive results in their overall relationship satisfaction. This line of reasoning leads to the first set of hypotheses:

H1-1. FBO male group will perceive higher relationship satisfaction than non-FBO male group.

H1-2. FBO female group will perceive higher relationship satisfaction than non-FBO female group.

As stated above, men and women recognize romantic relationships differently and create distinct goals in maintaining them. Although men and women both yearn for long or short term relationships, it has been claimed that women, normally, place higher importance on commitment and emotional closeness than men (Fuhrman et al., 2009; Fox & Warber, 2013). Thus, not only do women feel a stronger desire in securing a steady relationship but also a stronger satisfaction when this goal is achieved.

On the other hand, according to previous studies about marital well-being, it has been suggested that particular characteristics of men, such as interpersonal communication and intimacy, are correlated with marital satisfaction. However, characteristics of women were not related to satisfaction. Such findings support the idea that interpersonal skills and intimacy among females are considered normative and, thus, taken for granted. For men, these characteristics are more unusual and unexpected than women. Therefore, men will experience a salient increase in relationship satisfaction when the romantic relation becomes steady and strong (Acitelli, 1992).

Women are, also, more emotionally complicated and considered social-emotional specialists in relationships than men (Frazier & Esterly, 1990). That is to say, generally, women are more socially conformed. They are more sensitive about the quality of their relationship than men. As a result, women may judge their relationships more delicately and astutely (Frazier & Esterly, 1990). Thus, their bar for falling in love or staying in love may be set higher (Frazier & Esterly, 1990; Hill et al., 1976; Rubin et al., 1981). All in all, it can be predicted that women may not feel a dramatic change in relationship satisfaction by self-disclosure of relationship status online alone.

Thus, we can predict that men and women will perceive different relationship satisfaction levels when they go FBO. This prediction leads us to the following research question:

RQ. Are there sex differences in the perception of relationship satisfaction when couples go FBO?

As previously stated, it is also important to observe the many activities users conduct while they are on Facebook. These actions are deeply rooted in the user's motives to socially interact with others (Shao, 2009). Various relational effects can arise from the use of publicizing information on Facebook, such as uploading pictures taken with their partners or writing on the walls of each other. These activities are closely linked with the romantic integrative motives of the partners. Thus, other than going FBO, it can positively or negatively affect the overall perceived relationship satisfaction. Again, the important factor is *how much* romantic relationship information (RRI) is shared online:

H2-1. FBO male group will perceive higher relationship satisfaction when they publicize more RRI on Facebook.

H2-2. FBO female group will perceive higher relationship satisfaction when they publicize more RRI on Facebook.

Lastly, as noted above, individuals tend to find lovers who possess similar characteristics of their own (Houts et al., 1996). This tendency is largely due to the fact that when individuals evaluate and choose their partners, they judge them by comparing their own attributes to them (Houts et al., 1996). Previous research has claimed that couples who showed similar patterns of activities and behaviors experienced a higher relationship satisfaction than those who did not (Huston et al., 1981). Since similarities in behavior relate to the connectedness of the relationship and a steady courtship (Houts et al., 1996), if both partners participate equally in Facebook activities, the relationship satisfaction level may alter. This line of reasoning leads us to the following set of hypotheses:

H3-1. FBO male group will perceive higher romantic relationship satisfaction when both partners in the relationship participate equally in the activities on Facebook than when their participation is unequal.

H3-2. FBO female group will perceive higher romantic relationship satisfaction when both partners in the relationship participate equally in the activities on Facebook than when their participation is unequal.

Chapter 4. Method

4.1. Participants

An online survey was conducted with young Korean adults ($N = 517$, 265 males and 262 females). Of those, 254 (136 males and 118 females) were currently going FBO. We translated the English survey to Korean and conducted a back-translation to make sure the meaning of the questionnaire was not altered. Lastly, the translated survey was pretested by those who were unfamiliar with the research. All participants were asked to report their gender, age, and occupation. Only those who were currently involved in a romantic relationship were qualified to participate in the final survey and those who do not have a Facebook profile were eliminated. Only data that reveal relevancy for the current hypothesis are reported in this paper. The mean age of the participants was 24.3 ($SD = 2.95$). An online survey was conducted via Embrain, a private data collection company located in Seoul, Korea. Also, a pretest was conducted using a poll to ballpark the feasible number of participants who are currently using Facebook and also going FBO. Out of 517, 263 were not going FBO. Of those, 173 reported to have no Facebook status. Thus, they were not marked as a missing value. All missing values were filtered during the modification stage. Major characteristics of participants are presented in <Table 1>:

<Table 1> Major characteristics of survey participants (N=517)

		N	%
Gender (N=517, missing=0)	Male	265	49.3
	Female	262	50.7
Occupation (N=517, missing=0)	College students	209	40.4
	Graduate students	25	4.8
	Workers	246	47.6
	Other	37	7.2
Facebook official (N=517, missing=0)	Yes	254	49.1
	No	263	50.9
Facebook status among non FBO (N=263, missing=0)	Single	75	14.5
	Open relationship	12	2.3
	Etc	3	0.6
	No status	173	33.5
Relationship duration (N=517, missing=0)	Less than 1month	25	4.8
	1~3 months	50	9.7
	3~6 months	63	12.2
	6~12 months	85	16.4
	1~2 years	136	26.3
	More than 2 years	158	30.6
Duration of Facebook official (N=254, missing=0)	Less than 1month	17	3.3
	1~3 months	34	6.6
	3~6 months	30	5.8
	6~12 months	42	8.1
	1~2 years	59	11.4
	More than 2 years	72	13.9

4.2. Measures

1) *Gender* was measured by asking participants if they are male or female.

2) *Relationship characteristics:*

Questionnaires about relationship characteristics asked participants to report their current relationship and their current relationship status on Facebook. For current relationship status, participants were asked to answer whether they are "In a relationship," "Married," "Engaged," "Divorced," or "Single." They were also asked to select the duration of their current relationship.

For current relationship status on Facebook, participants were asked to choose one of the following categories: "No status shown," "Single," "In a relationship," "Engaged," "Married," "It's complicated," or "In an open relationship," "Separated," "Divorced," or "Others." Facebook relationship status that indicates an exclusive relationship status such as "In a relationship," was coded 1. Others that do not show a specific romantic relationship status were coded 0 (Papp et al., 2012). Those who are "Engaged" or "Married" were eliminated from final data analysis. Those who are currently going FBO were also asked to select how long they have gone FBO.

3) *Facebook use* was asked to measure the Facebook usage levels beyond simple measures of frequency and duration. This scale consisted of 7-items. The first two items were included to measure the frequency and duration of Facebook use such as how often the participants log on to Facebook and, on average, how many minutes per day they spend on it. Items 3 to 7 were assessed via the Facebook Intensity Scale (FBI) (Ellison et al., 2007). For item number 1, participants indicated their agreements on an 8-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *never* to 8 = *everyday*. For item number 2, participants indicated their agreements on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *10 minutes or less* to 6 = *3+hours*.

Other items were indicated in a 5–point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. <Table 2> demonstrates the items that were used to measure the participant's Facebook use.

<Table 2> Measurement Items for Facebook Use

-
1. On average, approximately how often do you log–on Facebook?
 2. On average, approximately how many minutes per day do you spend on Facebook?
 3. I am proud to tell people I'm on Facebook.
 4. Facebook has become part of my daily routine.
 5. I feel out of touch when I haven't logged onto Facebook for a while.
 6. I feel I am part of the Facebook community.
 7. I would be sorry if Facebook shut down.
-

4) *Degree of publicizing romantic relational information (RRI) on Facebook* was measured by asking participants how many activities they participate in such as uploading pictures taken with their partners, writing on walls of each other, writing about each other on their own profile page, tagging their partners on a post, and liking their partner's posts. In addition to this, participants were asked how often they participate in each activity while on Facebook. This scale consisted of 6–items which were used to measure the amount of publicizing romantic relationship information. Items were indicated in an 8–point Likert–type scale ranging from 1 = *never* to 8 = *everyday*. <Table 3> shows the items that were given to measure the participant's degree of publicizing romantic relationship information on Facebook.

<Table 3> Measurement Items for Degree of Publicizing RRI

1. On average, how many times do you upload pictures (or videos) taken together with your partner on your Facebook page?
 2. On average, how many times do you post messages on your partner's Facebook page?
 3. On average, how many times do you post writings about your partner or your relationship on your Facebook page?
 4. On average, how many times do you "tag" your partner when you go somewhere together (check-in) or when you see an interesting post you want to share with my partner?
 5. On average, how many times do you "comment" on your partner's postings on Facebook?
 6. On average, how many times do you "like" your partner's postings (pictures or writings) on Facebook?
-

5) *Equality in Facebook participation level* was measured by asking participants to indicate what type of activities their partner participate in on Facebook as well as how often they participate in it. This was asked to measure the degree of similarity of Facebook participation in terms of activity between themselves and their romantic partners. This scale consisted of 6-items. Items were indicated in an 8-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = *never* to 8 = *everyday*. <Table 4> shows the items that were used to measure the participant's partner's degree of publicizing romantic relationship information on Facebook.

**<Table 4> Measurement Items for Partner's Degree of
Publicizing RRI**

1. On average, how many times does your partner upload pictures (or videos) taken together with you on his/her Facebook page?
2. On average, how many times does your partner post messages on your Facebook page?
3. On average, how many times does your partner post writings about you or your relationship on his Facebook page?
4. On average, how many times does your partner "tag" you when you go somewhere together (check-in) or when he/she sees an interesting post he/she wants to share with you?
5. On average, how many times does your partner "comment" on your postings (pictures or writings) on Facebook.
6. On average, how many times does your partner "like" your postings (pictures or writings) on Facebook?

The degree of RRI of equal SNS participation level between the participant and his or her partner was measured by comparing the differences of SNS participation levels. RRI and PRRI are the mean values of each 6 items with an 8-point Likert-type scale in <Table 3> and <Table 4>, respectively. RRI and PRRI were calculated as follows:

$$RRI \text{ (or } PRRI) = \sum_{i=1}^N \alpha_i / N \text{ (or } \sum_{i=1}^N \beta_i / N), N = 6 \quad (1)$$

where α_i and β_i refer to the values of measurement items for the participant and their partner in <Table 3> and <Table 4>, respectively. N refers to the number of items.

DIPRI is defined to refer to the degree of inequality (or equality) between the participant and his or her romantic partner in

publicizing relationship information. The inequality value, DIPRI, is calculated by subtracting the PRRI from the RRI. DIPRI was calculated as follows:

$$DIPRI = RRI - PRRI = \sum_{i=1}^N (\alpha_i - \beta_i) / N, N = 6 \quad (2)$$

where $(\alpha_i - \beta_i)$ is the difference between each corresponding item in <Table 3> and <Table 4>. This scale measures the level of equality in SNS participation between the two romantic partners: the participant and his or her partner. If DIPRI is zero, there is an equal level of SNS participation between the two romantic partners. Non-zero value of DIPRI indicates an unequal level of SNS participation between the partners. In other words, lower DIPRI means higher equality in SNS participation level.

For a more detailed analysis, the unequal group in SNS participation level was subdivided into two groups: the positive (RRI>PRRI) and negative (RRI<PRRI) DIPRI groups. Positive (negative) DIPRI group represents those who publicize more (less) romantic relationship information online than their partners. The gender difference in the romantic relationship satisfaction for both positive and negative DIPRIs was also considered. Additionally, we tried to find possible factors that are related to romantic relationship satisfaction by separating the group into three groups (equal and positive and negative DIPRIs).

6) *Relationship satisfaction* was measured with the Couples Satisfaction Index (CSI) (Funk & Rogge, 2007). This scale consisted of 32-items to measure perceived romantic relationship satisfaction levels of the individual. Example items include "My relationship with my partner makes me happy" and "I feel that I can confide in my partner about virtually anything." Due to the limitation in length of the survey, only 10-items were used. All items were indicated in a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *not at all true*

to 6 = *completely true*. <Table 5> displays the items that were given to measure the participant's relationship satisfaction.

<Table 5> Measurement Items for Relationship Satisfaction

-
1. My relationship with my partner makes me happy.
 2. Our relationship is strong.
 3. I have a warm and comfortable relationship with my partner.
 4. I can't imagine ending my relationship with my partner.
 5. I feel that I can confide in my partner about virtually anything.
 6. I really feel like part of a team with my partner.
 7. How rewarding is your relationship with your partner?
 8. How well does your partner meet your needs?
 9. To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations?
 10. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?
-

7) *Perceived level of relationship satisfaction after going Facebook Official* was measured with the Couples Satisfaction Index (CSI) (Funk & Rogge, 2007). Only respondents who were currently going FBO were asked to answer these questions. Identical relationship satisfaction scale was used. However additional questions were asked if there were any changes in the perception of relationship satisfaction after going FBO. This scale consisted of 10-items. All items were indicated in a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *not at all true* to 6 = *completely true*. <Table 6> shows the items that were used to measure the participant's relationship satisfaction after going FBO with their partner.

**<Table 6> Measurement Items for Relationship Satisfaction after
going FBO**

1. After going FBO with my partner, I feel happier about my relationship with my partner than before.
 2. After going FBO with my partner, our relationship has become stronger than before.
 3. After going FBO with my partner, I have a warmer and more comfortable relationship with my partner than before.
 4. After going FBO with my partner, I can't imagine ending my relationship with my partner than before.
 5. After going FBO with my partner, I feel like I can confide in my partner about virtually anything than before.
 6. After going FBO with my partner, I feel like part of a team with my partner more than before.
 7. After going FBO with my partner, I feel more rewarding about my relationship with my partner than before.
 8. After going FBO with my partner, I feel like my partner meet my needs better than before.
 9. After going FBO with my partner, I feel like the relationship has met my original expectations to a higher extent than before.
 10. After going FBO with my partner, I feel like I am more satisfied with my relationship than before.
-

Chapter 5. Results

5.1. Descriptive Analyses

<Table 7> displays the means and standard deviations of major variables.

<Table 7> Means and Standard Deviations of Major Variables

		N	Mean	SD
Facebook Intensity ^①	Male	255	-.05	3.94
	Female	262	.05	4.11
	Total	517	0.00	4.03
Publicizing Romantic Relational Information	Male	136	4.09	1.94
	Female	118	4.73	1.73
	Total	254	4.39	1.87
Partners' Romantic Relational Information	Male	136	3.98	1.98
	Female	118	4.99	2.01
	Total	254	4.45	2.05
Relationship Satisfaction	Male	255	4.45	1.15
	Female	262	4.31	1.08
	Total	517	4.38	1.12
Satisfaction after Facebook official	Male	136	3.20	1.42
	Female	118	2.76	1.39
	Total	254	2.99	1.42

Note. All measurements were transformed by assessing the mean of each measurement. Facebook intensity was measured with 7 items; Item 1 ranged from 1 to 8, item 2 ranged from 1 to 6, and items 3 to 7 ranged from 1 to 5. Publicizing Romantic Relational Information was measured with 6 items ranging from 1 to 8. Partners' Romantic Relational Information

^① Individual items were first standardized before taking an average to create scale due to differing item scale ranges.

was measured with 6 items ranging from 1 to 8. Relationship Satisfaction was measured with 10 items ranging from 1 to 6. Satisfaction after Facebook official was measured with 10 items ranging from 1 to 6.

5.2. Hypothesis Testing

In order to test the correlation between the resulting relationship satisfaction and several characteristics of the participants, a series of t-test was conducted. The first hypothesis predicted that FBO male and female group will perceive higher relationship satisfaction than non-FBO male and female group. Specifically, out of 517 participants, 254 participants were going FBO and 263 participants were not going FBO. Both male and female groups indicated similar levels of Facebook intensity ($M_{\text{male}} = 3.04$, $SD = .84$, $M_{\text{female}} = 3.01$, $SD = .85$). As predicted, both male and female FBO groups reported higher relationship satisfaction than non-FBO groups, ($t = 10.94$, $p < 0.01$). Thus, those who are currently going FBO had a higher level of romantic relationship satisfaction. Specifically, for males, out of 255 participants, 136 males reported of going FBO. <Table 8> shows that FBO males feel higher relationship satisfaction than non-FBO males ($t = 6.76$, $p < .05$). The mean relationship satisfaction of FBO male group was 4.62 ($SD = 1.17$) and the mean of non-FBO male group was 4.25 ($SD = 1.10$). Therefore, hypothesis 1.1 was supported. For females, out of 262 participants, 118 females reported of going FBO. Results showed that the mean differences between FBO female and non-FBO female in satisfaction level were marginally significant ($t = 3.64$, $p = .06$). The mean satisfaction of FBO female group was 4.45 ($SD = 1.08$) and the mean of non-FBO female group was 4.20 ($SD = 1.06$). Therefore, hypothesis 1.2 was also supported (see <Table 8>).

**<Table 8> Relationship Satisfaction of Male and Female
FBO and non-FBO Group**

	N	Mean(SD)	t
Male	255		
FBO	136	4.62(1.17)	6.76*
Non-FBO	119	4.25(1.10)	
Female	262		
FBO	118	4.45(1.08)	3.64 ⁺
Non-FBO	144	4.20(1.06)	

* $p < .05$; ⁺ $p = .06$ (one-tailed)

Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted to control for relevant variables (covariates) that could affect the resulting relationship satisfaction. Facebook intensity and relationship duration were tested to see if, under control, the resulting satisfaction could be altered. Earlier research (e.g., Utz & Beukeboom, 2011; Papp et al., 2012; Fox et al., 2014; Fox et al., 2012; Fox & Warber, 2013) have shown that self-esteem, jealousy, and Facebook intensity can influence relationship satisfaction. Couples who have had a long stable relationship might not feel much relationship satisfaction increase than those who have just started dating. Moreover, those who use Facebook more actively might feel a higher relationship satisfaction increase when they go FBO.

More explicitly, it was hypothesized that male FBO group would have higher levels of relationship satisfaction than non-FBO male group. However, since there may exist individual differences between the FBO group and non-FBO group, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted on relationship satisfaction using Facebook official as an independent variable and controlling two variables – relationship duration and Facebook intensity. The results are displayed in <Table 9>. Results were basically identical with the previous t-tests. <Table 9> shows that, for males, relationship satisfaction was altered significantly by going Facebook official ($p < .05$).

<Table 9> ANCOVA for Relationship Satisfaction of Male Group

	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Significance
Covariates			
Relationship Duration	1	8.51	.00
Facebook Intensity	1	5.50	.02
Facebook Official	1	6.19	.01
Error	251		
Total	255		

Furthermore, it was also predicted that female FBO group would have higher levels of relationship satisfaction than non-FBO female group. ANCOVA was again conducted on relationship satisfaction using Facebook official as an independent variable and relationship duration and Facebook intensity as two controlling variables. We tested if the two control variables significantly affected the results found in previous t-tests. <Table 10> shows that, even after controlling for the two covariates, for the female group, relationship satisfaction level was not altered by going Facebook official ($p > .05$).

<Table 10> ANCOVA for Relationship Satisfaction of Female Group

	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Significance
Covariates			
Relationship Duration	1	18.31	.00
Facebook Intensity	1	.07	.79
Facebook Official	1	1.81	.18
Error	258		
Total	262		

With regard to the research question, it was examined if there were sex differences in the perception of relationship satisfaction when couples go FBO. To test this, perceived levels of relationship satisfaction after going Facebook Official was measured separately

between FBO male and female group. Results showed sex differences in the perception of relationship satisfaction when couples publicized their relationship online ($t = 6.17, p < .05$). Overall, males experienced a higher relationship satisfaction after going FBO with their partner than females ($M_{\text{male}} = 3.20, SD = 1.42, M_{\text{female}} = 2.76, SD = 1.39$) as shown in <Table 11>).

**<Table 11> Gender Differences of Relationship Satisfaction
after going Facebook Official**

Gender	N	Mean(SD)	t
Male	136	3.20(1.42)	6.17*
Female	118	2.76(1.39)	

* $p < .05$ (one-tailed)

The second hypothesis predicted that FBO male and female group who publicize more romantic relationship information on Facebook will perceive higher relationship satisfaction than those who publicize less relationship information online. Specifically, out of 254 participants who were going FBO, 136 participants were male and 118 participants were female. The mean romantic relationship information publication of FBO male group was 4.09 ($SD = 1.94$) and the mean romantic relationship information publication of FBO female group was 4.73 ($SD = 1.73$). As predicted, male FBO groups reported higher relationship satisfaction when they publicized more romantic relationship information online, ($r = .18, p < .05$). The correlation was significant at the 0.05 level. Therefore, hypothesis 2.1 was supported. However, for female FBO groups, a different picture emerged. Results did not show much difference in relationship satisfaction when they publicized more romantic relationship information on Facebook ($r = .07, p > .05$). There was no significant correlation between relationship satisfaction and RRI of female FBO group. Thus, hypothesis 2.2 was rejected (see <Table 12>).

**<Table 12> Romantic Relationship Information Publication and
Relationship Satisfaction**

Gender	N	RRI Mean(SD)	Satisfaction Mean (SD)	<i>r</i>
Male	136	4.09(1.94)	4.62(1.17)	.18*
Female	118	4.73(1.73)	4.45(1.08)	.07

* $p < .05$ (one-tailed)

The third hypothesis anticipated that FBO male and female groups who participate equally in romantic relationship activities between partners online will perceive higher relationship satisfaction than those who participate unequally. Out of 254 participants who were going FBO, 59 participants were participating equally in the activities on Facebook with their partners and 195 participants were participating unequally. Specifically for male group, out of 136 participants, 31 were participating equally and 105 were participating unequally. For female group, among 118 participants, 28 were equally participating and 90 were unequally participating with their partners. As anticipated, male FBO groups reported higher relationship satisfaction when they participated equally in Facebook romantic relationship activities with their partner ($t = 4.00, p < .05$). The mean satisfaction of FBO male group who were equally participating in Facebook activities with their partner was 4.99 (SD = 1.13) and the mean satisfaction of male group who were unequally participating in Facebook activities with their partner was 4.52 (SD = 1.17). Therefore, hypothesis 3.1 was supported (see <Table 13>).

Again, however, female FBO groups showed not much change in relationship satisfaction when they had equal participation in Facebook activities with their partners ($t = .31, p > .05$). The mean satisfaction of FBO female group who experienced equal participation in Facebook activities with their partner was 4.35 (SD=1.29) and the mean satisfaction of FBO female group who had

unequal participation in Facebook activities with their partner was 4.48 (SD=1.01). Therefore, hypothesis 3.2 was not supported (see <Table 13>).

<Table 13> Relationship Satisfaction of Equal vs. Unequal Group			
	N	Mean(SD)	t
Male	136		
Equal	31	4.99(1.13)	4.00*
Unequal	105	4.52(1.17)	
Female	118		
Equal	28	4.35(1.29)	0.31
Unequal	90	4.48(1.01)	

* $p < .05$ (one-tailed)

For a more detailed analysis, as illustrated in <Table 14>, the unequal male and female groups were separated into two categories: those who publicize more romantic relationship information online than their partner (Positive DIPRI or $RRI > PRRI$) and those who publicize less romantic relationship information online than their partner (Negative DIPRI or $RRI < PRRI$). For male group, out of 105 who were participating unequally, 39 were publicizing more romantic relationship information (RRI) online than their partners and 66 were publicizing less information than their partners. For females, out of 90 who were unequally participating with their partners, 59 were publicly disclosing more RRI online than their partners and the other 34 were disclosing less RRI compared to their significant other.

**<Table 14> Relationship Satisfaction of Equal vs. Unequal Group
(RRI>PRRI) vs. Unequal Group (RRI<PRRI)**

	N	Mean(SD)	F
Male	136		
Equal	31	4.99(1.13)	3.17*
RRI>PRRI	39	4.74(1.25)	
RRI<PRRI	66	4.38(1.11)	
Female	118		
Equal	28	4.35(1.29)	0.49
RRI>PRRI	59	4.56(1.06)	
RRI<PRRI	34	4.36(.93)	

* $p < .05$ (one-tailed)

As for males, significant differences were found among the three subgroups: equal and two unequal groups (RRI>PRRI and RRI<PRRI). According to the results of Tukey's HSD Post-hoc test, the mean differences of the male equal group and negative DIPRI (RRI<PRRI) group was .61. That is, for men, when their partner equally reported RRI online they experienced higher relationship satisfaction than when their significant other reported more RRI online than themselves. However, for women, no significant differences were found between these groups. In other words, for women, how much romantic relationship information their partner reported online was not a strong enough factor that affected their overall romantic relationships satisfaction.

Again, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted on relationship satisfaction of males using unequal participation in Facebook activities as an independent variable and relationship duration and Facebook intensity as two controlling variables. Again, even after controlling for the two co-variates, the findings from the previous t-tests were not significantly different. <Table 15> demonstrates that, for males, relationship satisfaction advances when equally participating in Facebook relationship activities with their partners ($p < .05$).

<Table 15> ANCOVA for Relationship Satisfaction of Male Group

	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Significance
Covariates			
Relationship Duration	1	6.20	.01
Facebook Intensity	1	2.03	.16
Facebook Activity Inequality	1	3.59	.03
Error	131		
Total	136		

Similar analysis was performed for female group. Again, the resulting analysis was comparable to previous findings. <Table 16> shows that, for female group, relationship satisfaction was not altered according to the level of equal participation in Facebook activities with their partner ($p > .05$).

<Table 16> ANCOVA for Relationship Satisfaction of Female Group

	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Significance
Covariates			
Relationship Duration	1	6.28	.01
Facebook Intensity	1	.16	.69
Facebook Activity Inequality	2	.14	.87
Error	113		
Total	118		

Chapter 6. Conclusion and Discussion

1.1. Conclusion

This paper focused on the role of going Facebook Official among female and male groups and how it affects their psychological relationship happiness. In general, young people in South Korea who were publicly going FBO experienced a higher relationship satisfaction than those who were not. This agrees with the previous research illustrating that those who go FBO will place a significant meaning on the label and perceive the status as a big step in their relationship. Going FBO, for both men and women, has common beliefs such as commitment and intensity. Thus, both gender identified positive changes in relationship satisfaction after going FBO.

As predicted, females placed importance on the social publication of their relationship online. In line with previous research, this result can be interpreted as follows: women believe going FBO indicates exclusivity and seriousness and they believe going FBO yields attention from their social networks. Men, on the other hand, tend to be more complicated. Past research has shown two distinct results in the meaning of going FBO and how it affects men. According to Fox and Warber (2013) men place lower importance in going FBO than women. They claim that this is largely due to the fact that men, unlike women, place less significance in securing a relationship and becoming committed to one partner. However, other researchers state that men also place high meaning on publically going FBO with their partner. They claim that men also feel the need to eliminate third-party threats and seek for a more steady relationship (Buss & Schmitt, 1993). According to this study, men also felt an increase in satisfaction with their relationship when gone FBO with their significant other.

This supports suggestion that men, as well as women, place an importance in publicizing their romantic relationship online to secure their relationship and commit to it.

However, there were gender differences in the level of perception in satisfaction when publicizing his or her romantic relationship online. Overall, men experienced more happiness and satisfaction than women when openly publicizing his or her romantic relationship online. This result reflects a different perspective to the previous research conducted by Fox and Warber (2013). Unlike what they had argued before, men did not place a lower significance in going FBO than women. Rather, they placed higher significance in going FBO than women.

One possible explanation for this result is that men are found to be more romantic than women (Frazier & Esterly, 1990). Contrary to stereotypical views on gender, men tend to fall in love more quickly than women and they tend to look at their relationship with more serious minds. On the other hand, women find it more difficult to fall in love and see love as a long and developing process. In short, men may look at love and romance in a more simplistic way than women. Thus, it can be explained that by going FBO, men felt a stronger connection with their partner and experienced more happiness in their relationship. Women also felt an increase in satisfaction but not as strongly as men. This can be explained by previous claims that women tend to be more astute and hardheaded about their romantic relationships than men. Some researchers argue that women are more cautious because they are more emotionally independent on relationships than men (Frazier & Esterly, 1990). Another reason for this gender difference can be that women are more socially and emotionally attuned (Frazier & Esterly, 1990). Thus, they are more sensitive about the quality of their relationships than men (Frazier & Esterly, 1990). As a result, women may judge their relationships more delicately and astutely. Thus, their bar for falling in love or staying in love may be set

higher (Frazier & Esterly, 1990). Therefore, women may not easily feel an increase in relationship satisfaction simply by going FBO with their partners.

For men, degree of publication positively affected their romantic relationship satisfaction. However, for women, this was not a strong enough factor that affected their relationship satisfaction. According to previous research about marital well-being, it has been studied that particular characteristics of men, such as interpersonal communication and intimacy, are correlated with marital satisfaction. However, characteristics of women were not related to satisfaction. Such findings support the idea that interpersonal skills and intimacy among females are considered normative and, thus, expected as natural. For men, these characteristics are more unusual and unexpected than women. Therefore, men will experience a salient increase in relationship satisfaction (Acitelli, 1992). Thus, when the degree of romantic relationship publication online is increased, women see this as a normative and expected act of romance. However, for men this is an unusual and unexpected experience, which can alter their relationship satisfaction. For women, this can be seen as an expected act of relationship maintenance and do not feel a change in relationship satisfaction. Christenson and Heavey (1990) stated that women tend to put more effort to the overall development of their romantic relationship than men. Therefore, women feel a higher responsibility in the promotion of the relationship. In addition, women perceive relational issues as a more important and significant issue than men. All in all, women feel a stronger desire for a better relationship and yearn for an upgrade in their overall relational satisfaction. Thus, their bar may be set high and their expectations to a better relationship can be higher than men.

Equality in SNS participation level was also an important factor that affected the level of romantic relationship satisfaction only for men. More specifically, for men, when their partner and they,

themselves, equally reported RRI online they experienced higher relationship satisfaction than when their partner reported more RRI online than themselves. However, women, again, did not see this as an important factor that altered their satisfaction in their relationship. Equal participation in Facebook activities, although not the same, can also be seen as equal participation in offline leisure activities among couples. According to Levinger and Rands (1985), the equality in participation between couples determines the mutual satisfaction of the bond. When more qualities of the partner are found equal to their own, higher levels of relationship satisfaction were experienced (Houts et al., 1996). Men did experience a higher level increase in relationship happiness when they experienced equality in Facebook romantic relationship activities, whereas women did not.

This can also be explained by previous arguments that women do not see this as an unusual act of romance but they see this as a normative act of love (Acitelli, 1992). Also, it can be explained by existing theories that women evaluate their overall relationship satisfaction more carefully and pragmatically (Hill et al., 1976; Rubin et al., 1981). Last but not least, this can be explained as a cultural difference. Han and Shin (2007), in their study about Korean couples and their relationship desires, found contrasting results in relation to gender and the overall romantic relationship satisfaction compared to previous theories. Existing theories state that women are more relation-oriented and men are more independent (Helgeson, 1994; Kashima et al., 1995; Prager & Buhrmester, 1998; Wood et al., 1989). However, according to their result, Korean women had a stronger desire for autonomy and competence compared to their desire for mutual dependence when involved in a romantic relationship. They explained these differences as a result of a sampling error or due to the narrow-sidedness of survey questionnaires. However, much attention should be given to the fact that cultural differences, on top of gender differences, may alter the interpretation of their results and

affect the psychological satisfaction levels of young adults.

1.2. Implications

This research puts light on searching for the changes an SNS activity can give to a couple's overall relationship satisfaction. Very little prior research has examined the changes an SNS activity can give to a couple's psychological well-being and how and why this affects their overall relationship. Although it is not easy to explain all areas of differences, this research also sheds light to gender differences in relationship satisfaction. It is significant in finding how relationship satisfaction changes were different among gender. Also, it is especially important in that relationship satisfaction levels and changes were measured according to the activities couples make online. The degree and equality in romantic relationship information publication in Facebook are the two factors that have not yet been investigated in previous research. However, they are essential factors that can alter the overall relationship satisfaction.

The results give light to other possible research that can deeply look into the reasons as to why only men feel higher satisfaction changes when these factors are altered. Also, cultural differences should also be considered with much attention. Since this was the first research that studied the effects of going FBO and the changes it gives to romantic relationship satisfaction among young Korean adults, more research relating to this particular topic can be needed in a cultural perspective.

1.3. Limitations and Future Research

It is necessary to note some limitations of the current research. First of all, we were unable to measure other possible variables on Facebook that can affect the romantic relationship happiness. Also, social desirability may have affected the results because all measures were self-reported. For example, the partner's degree of publicizing RRI on Facebook was measured subjectively. Therefore, an objective measure of the partner's publication of the RRI was unable to obtain.

Moreover, due to the lack of time and difficulties in recruitment, the recruitment period for sampling was very short. Including the poll that was conducted as a pretest, the recruit period lasted for only two weeks. If a couple with high relationship happiness had a quarrel or was feeling down on that specific week, it could have affected the results and, thus, cause errors in measurement. Lastly, when comparing the equality between groups, the size of participants with equal participation with their partners was somewhat insufficient.

For future research, additional measurement of other variables such as various functions available in Facebook and other factors that can affect the satisfaction levels of couples are necessary—including jealousy and self-esteem. Also, if the measurements are made more than once, more precise results can be obtained. Rather than a one-shot study, a long term study of the individuals can also provide a more precise change in trend. Moreover, an objective measure of the RRI and a more comprehensive measurement of the psychological differences between men and women are advisable in future research.

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Appendix

▷ Background information

1. Do you currently have a Facebook account?
a. Yes
b. No
2. What is your gender? (<i>Circle one</i>)
a. Male
b. Female
3. What is your current relationship status? (Not Facebook status) (<i>Circle one</i>)
a. In a relationship
b. Married
c. Divorced/separated
d. Single
4. What is your current relationship status on Facebook? (<i>Circle one</i>)
a. In a relationship
b. Engaged
c. Married
d. Single
e. It's complicated
f. In an open relationship
g. Widowed
h. Separated
I. Divorced
j. Other
k. No status shown

▷ Facebook Intensity Scale (FBI) (Ellison et al., 2007).

Instructions

Below is a list of question and statements dealing with the degree of Facebook usage.

Please select one answer that best represents your opinion.

1. On average, approximately how often do you log-on Facebook?			
Everyday	2 to 3 times a week	Once a week	Once in 2 weeks
Once a month	Once in 6 months	Once a year	Never
2. On average, approximately how many minutes per day do you spend on Facebook?			
10 or less	10–30	31–60	1–2 hours
2–3 hours	3+hours		
3. I am proud to tell people I'm on Facebook.			
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	
Disagree	Strongly Disagree		
4. Facebook has become part of my daily routine.			
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	
Disagree	Strongly Disagree		
5. I feel out of touch when I haven't logged onto Facebook for a while.			
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	
Disagree	Strongly Disagree		
6. I feel I am part of the Facebook community.			
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	
Disagree	Strongly Disagree		
7. I would be sorry if Facebook shut down.			
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	
Disagree	Strongly Disagree		

▷ Degree of publicizing relationship information on Facebook

Instructions			
<i>Below is a list of questions dealing with the degree of how much you publicize romantic relationship information about you and your partner on Facebook.</i>			
<i>Please indicate, on average, how often you publicize your relationship on Facebook.</i>			
1. On average, how many times do you upload pictures (or videos) taken together with your partner on your Facebook page?			
Everyday	2 to 3 times a week	Once a week	Once in 2 weeks

Once a month Once in 6 months Once a year Never
2. On average, how many times do you post messages on your partner's Facebook page?
Everyday 2 to 3 times a week Once a week Once in 2 weeks Once a month Once in 6 months Once a year Never
3. On average, how many times do you post writings about your partner or your relationship on your Facebook page?
Everyday 2 to 3 times a week Once a week Once in 2 weeks Once a month Once in 6 months Once a year Never
4. On average, how many times do you "tag" your partner when you go somewhere together (check-in) or when you see an interesting post you want to share with my partner?
Everyday 2 to 3 times a week Once a week Once in 2 weeks Once a month Once in 6 months Once a year Never
5. On average, how many times do you "comment" on your partner's postings on Facebook.
Everyday 2 to 3 times a week Once a week Once in 2 weeks Once a month Once in 6 months Once a year Never
6. On average, how many times do you "like" your partner's postings (pictures or writings) on Facebook?
Everyday 2 to 3 times a week Once a week Once in 2 weeks Once a month Once in 6 months Once a year Never

▷ Equality in Facebook participation level

<p>Instructions</p> <p><i>Below is a list of questions dealing with the degree of Facebook participation of your partner in relation to your relationship. Please indicate, on average, how often your partner publicize your relationship on Facebook.</i></p>
1. On average, how many times does your partner upload pictures (or videos) taken together with you on his/her Facebook page?
Everyday 2 to 3 times a week Once a week Once in 2 weeks Once a month Once in 6 months Once a year Never
2. On average, how many times does your partner post messages on

your Facebook page?
Everyday 2 to 3 times a week Once a week Once in 2 weeks Once a month Once in 6 months Once a year Never
3. On average, how many times does your partner post writings about you or your relationship on his Facebook page?
Everyday 2 to 3 times a week Once a week Once in 2 weeks Once a month Once in 6 months Once a year Never
4. On average, how many times does your partner "tag" you when you go somewhere together (check-in) or when he/she sees an interesting post he/she wants to share with you?
Everyday 2 to 3 times a week Once a week Once in 2 weeks Once a month Once in 6 months Once a year Never
5. On average, how many times does your partner "comment" on your postings (pictures or writings) on Facebook.
Everyday 2 to 3 times a week Once a week Once in 2 weeks Once a month Once in 6 months Once a year Never
6. On average, how many times does your partner "like" your postings (pictures or writings) on Facebook?
Everyday 2 to 3 times a week Once a week Once in 2 weeks Once a month Once in 6 months Once a year Never

▷ Couples Satisfaction Index (Fox & Rogge, 2007).

<p>Instructions</p> <p><i>Below is a list of statements dealing with your perceived levels of relationship satisfaction.</i></p> <p><i>Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item.</i></p>					
Not at all True	A little True	Somew hat True	Mostly True	Almost Completely True	Comple tely True
<p>1. My relationship with my partner makes me happy.</p> <p>0 1 2 3 4 5</p>					
<p>2. Our relationship is strong.</p>					

0	1	2	3	4	5
3. I have a warm and comfortable relationship with my partner.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
4. I can't imagine ending my relationship with my partner.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
5. I feel that I can confide in my partner about virtually anything.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
6. I really feel like part of a team with my partner.					
0	1	2	3	4	5
Not at All	A little	Somewhat	Mostly	Almost completely	Completely
7. How rewarding is your relationship with your partner?					
0	1	2	3	4	5
8. How well does your partner meet your needs?					
0	1	2	3	4	5
9. To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations?					
0	1	2	3	4	5
10. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?					
0	1	2	3	4	5

▷ Perceived levels of relationship satisfaction after going Facebook Official (Utz & Baukeboom, 2011; Fox & Rogge, 2007).

<p><i>Instructions</i></p> <p><i>Below is a list of statements dealing with your perceived levels of relationship satisfaction after going Facebook Official (FBO). Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.</i></p>					
Not at all True	A little True	Somewhat True	Mostly True	Almost Completely True	Completely True
1. After going FBO with my partner, I feel happier about my					

relationship with my partner than before.	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. After going FBO with my partner, our relationship has become stronger than before.	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. After going FBO with my partner, I have a warmer and more comfortable relationship with my partner than before.	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. After going FBO with my partner, I can't imagine ending my relationship with my partner than before.	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. After going FBO with my partner, I feel like I can confide in my partner about virtually anything than before.	0	1	2	3	4	5
6. After going FBO with my partner, I feel like part of a team with my partner more than before.	0	1	2	3	4	5
7. After going FBO with my partner, I feel more rewarding about my relationship with my partner than before.	0	1	2	3	4	5
8. After going FBO with my partner, I feel like my partner meet my needs better than before.	0	1	2	3	4	5
9. After going FBO with my partner, I feel like the relationship has met my original expectations to a higher extent than before.	0	1	2	3	4	5
10. After going FBO with my partner, I feel like I am more satisfied with my relationship than before.	0	1	2	3	4	5

한국어 설문지

1 귀하의 성별은 어떻게 되십니까?

- ☐ 남자 ☐ 여자

2 귀하의 연령은 어떻게 되십니까?

출생연도 = 만 세

·패널님의 출생연도를 입력하시면 만나이가 계산됩니다.

·출생연도는 [주민등록상의 출생연도](#)를 입력하세요.

3 귀하의 직업은 어떻게 되십니까?

- ☐ 대학생
☐ 대학원생
☐ 직장인
☐ 주부
☐ 기타

4 귀하께서 이용하시는 SNS는 무엇입니까? 모두 선택하여 주십시오.

☐ 인스타그램 ☐ 트위터 ☐ 페이스북 ☐ 라인

☐

카카오
스토리

☐

기타

☐

SNS
사용하지
않음

5 귀하는 현재 연애 중 이신가요? (결혼/약혼 제외)

- ☐ 예 ☐ 아니오

5-1 당신은 애인과의 연애 기간이 얼마나 되나요?

- ☐ 1개월 미만
☐ 1-3 개월 미만
☐ 3-6 개월 미만
☐ 6-12 개월 미만
☐ 1-2 년 미만
☐ 2년 이상

6 귀하의 결혼 유무는 어떻게 되십니까?

한 개만 선택 가능

- ☐ 약혼
☐ 결혼
☐ 돌싱 (이혼한 후 현재 싱글)
☐ 싱글 (결혼을 하지 않음. 연애중은 포함)

7 귀하의 현재 페이스북 관계 상태가 “연애 중”으로
되어있습니까?

- ☐ 예 ☐ 아니오

7- 당신은 당신의 페이스북 관계 상태를 "연애 중"으로 바꾼 지
1 얼마나 오래되었나요?

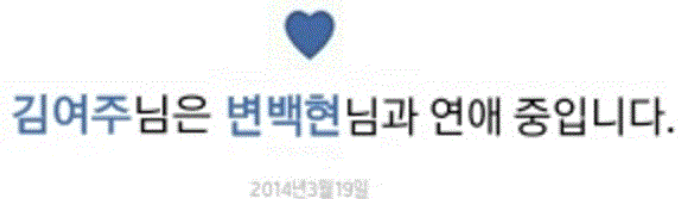
- ☐ 1개월 미만
☐ 1-3 개월 미만
☐ 3-6 개월 미만
☐ 6-12 개월 미만
☐ 1-2 년 미만
☐ 2년 이상

7- 당신의 현재 페이스북 관계 상태는 어떻습니까?
2

- ☐ 싱글 (결혼을 하지 않음)
☐ 약혼
☐ 기혼
☐ 복잡한 연애
☐ 자유로운 연애
☐ 별거 중
☐ 이혼
☐ 그 외
☐ 상태 없음

본 연구는 온라인 상에서 이성관계가 어떻게 관리되고 표현되는지, 그리고 SNS 이용이 개인의 이성관계 만족도에 어떠한 영향을 미치는지에 대해 깊이 있게 고찰하고자 합니다. 현재 연애를 하고 있는 페이스북 이용자들 중 자신의 페이스북 프로필에 연인 관계를 애인과 공개적으로 "연애 중"이라고 올린 사람들과 그렇지 않은 사람들의 관계 만족도를 측정하여 이들의 관계 만족도에 차이가 있는지 측정해 보려고 합니다.

"연애 중" 페이스북 관계 상태 예시:



또한 만약 자신의 페이스북 프로필에 애인과 공개적으로 "연애 중"을 했다면 하기 전에 비해 전체적인 관계 만족도가 달라졌는지 측정하려 합니다. 전체적인 연애 관계 만족도를 측정하고 그 외 성별, 페이스북 속 이성 관계 정보 노출의 정도와 애인과의 페이스북 활동 참여 동일성을 함께 측정하여 더욱 깊이 있게 페이스북이 연인 관계에 어떠한 영향을 미치는지 보려고 합니다.

귀하께서 작성하신 설문지는 순수하게 학문적 목적 외에는 절대 다른 용도로 사용하지 않을 것을 약속 드립니다.

설문지 대답 예상시간은 5-10분입니다. 모든 문항을 성의 있게 솔직하게 답해주시면 감사 드리겠습니다.

설문조사에 응해주셔서 감사합니다.

다음 문항들은 귀하의 페이스북 사용 정도와 관련된 문항들입니다.
귀하와 가장 잘 맞는 대답을 각 문항 당 하나씩 선택해 주세요.

1 평균적으로, 귀하께서는 페이스북에 얼마나 자주 로그인 하십니까?

- ☐ 매일
- ☐ 일주일에 2-3번
- ☐ 일주일에 한번
- ☐ 2주에 한번
- ☐ 한 달에 한번
- ☐ 6개월에 한번
- ☐ 1년에 한번
- ☐ 안 함

2 평균적으로, 귀하께서는 페이스북을 하루에 몇 분(몇 시간)동안 사용하십니까?

- ☐ 10분 미만
- ☐ 10-30분 미만
- ☐ 30-60분 미만
- ☐ 1-2시간 미만
- ☐ 2-3시간 미만
- ☐ 3시간 이상

3 가장 알맞은 대답을 선택하여 주시기 바랍니다.

	매우 동의함	동의함	중립적	동의하지 않음	전혀 동의하지 않음
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1. 나는 내가 페이스북을 한다는 것을 자랑스럽게 다른 사람한테 말할 수 있다.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. 페이스북은 내 일과 중 한 부분이 되었다.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. 페이스북에 한동안 로그인하지 않으면 동떨어진 (접촉이 끊긴) 느낌이 든다.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. 난 페이스북 공동체에 소속된 느낌을 받는다.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. 나는 페이스북이 폐쇄되면 유감스러울 것이다.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

아래 문항들은 귀하가 귀하의 연애 정보를 페이스북에 노출하는 정도를 측정하기 위한 문항들입니다.
 4 귀하와 가장 잘 맞는 대답을 각 문항 당 하나씩 선택해 주세요.

	매 일	일주 일 에 2- 3번	일주 일 에 한번	2주 에 한 번	한 달 에 한 번	6개월 에 한번	1년 에 한 번	안 함

1. 당신은 평균적으로 얼마나 자주 당신의 페이스북 페이지에 애인과 함께 찍은 사진(혹은 동영상)을 올리십니까?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. 당신은 평균적으로 얼마나 자주 애인의 페이스북 페이지(답벼락)에 메시지를 남기십니까?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. 당신은 평균적으로 얼마나 자주 당신의 페이스북 페이지에 애인과 관련된 글을 올리나요?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. 당신은 평균적으로 얼마나 자주 애인을 “태그” 하나요? (함께 간 곳을 체크인하면서 애인을 태그 혹은 흥미로운 글이나 동영상을 보았을 때 애인을 태그)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. 당신은 평균적으로 얼마나 자주 애인의 포스팅(글/사진)에 댓글을 다나요?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. 당신은 평균적으로 얼마나 자주 애인의 포스팅(글/사진)에 “좋아요”를 하나요?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5

아래 문항들은 귀하의 애인이 귀하와의 연애 정보를 페이스북에 노출하는 정도를 측정하기 위한 문항들입니다. 귀하의 애인과 가장 잘 맞는 대답을 각 문항 당 하나씩 선택해 주세요.

	매 일	일주 일 에 2- 3번	일주 일 에 한번	2주 에 한 번	한 달 에 한 번	6개월 에 한번	1년 에 한 번	안 함
1. 당신의 애인은 평균적으로 얼마나 자주 그/그녀의 페이스북 페이지에 당신과 함께 찍은 사진(혹은 동영상)을 올리나요?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. 당신의 애인은 평균적으로 얼마나 자주 당신의 페이스북 페이지(답변)에 메시지를 남기나요?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. 당신의 애인은 평균적으로 얼마나 자주 그/그녀의 페이스북 페이지에 당신과 관련된 글을 올리나요?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. 당신의 애인은 평균적으로 얼마나	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

자주 당신을 “태그” 하나요? (함께 간 곳을 체크인하면서 당신을 태그 혹은 흥미로운 글이나 동영상을 보았을 때 당신을 태그)								
5. 당신의 애인은 평균적으로 얼마나 자주 당신의 포스팅(글/사진)에 댓글을 다나요?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. 당신의 애인은 평균적으로 얼마나 자주 당신의 포스팅(글/사진)에 “좋 아요” 를 하나요?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

아래 문항들은 귀하의 전체적인 연애 관계 만족도를 측정하기
6 위한 문항들입니다.
귀하와 가장 잘 맞는 대답을 각 문항 당 하나씩 선택해 주세요.

	전혀 그렇지 않다	약간 그렇다	어느 정도 그렇다	주로 그렇다	거의 대부분 그렇다	완전히 그렇다
1. 나는 내 애인과의 관계에 대한 행복함을 느낀다.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. 나는 내 애인과 강한 유대감을 가지고	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

있다.						
3. 나는 내 애인과 따뜻하고 편안한 관계를 가지고 있다.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. 나는 내 애인과 헤어지는 것을 상상할 수 없다.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. 나는 내 애인에게 거의 모든 비밀을 털어놓을 수 있다.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. 나는 내 애인과 한 팀을 이룬 것 같다.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

아래 문항들은 귀하의 전체적인 연애 관계 만족도를 측정하기
 6 위한 문항들입니다.
 귀하와 가장 잘 맞는 대답을 각 문항 당 하나씩 선택해 주세요.

	전혀	약간	어느 정도	주로	거의 대부분	완전히
1. 현재 당신은 당신의 애인과의 관계에 대한 보람을 얼마나 느끼나요?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. 현재 당신의 애인은 관계에 대한 당신의 요구를 얼마나 만족시켜주나요?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. 현재 당신의	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

애인과의 관계가 당신이 평소에 가지고 있었던 연애의 기대치에 얼마나 부응하나요?						
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7 평균적으로 귀하의 애인과의 전체적인 관계 만족도가 어떻게 되십니까?

전혀 만족하지 않음 0	약간 만족함 1	어느 정도 만족함 2	주로 만족함 3	거의 대부분 만족함 4	완전히 만족함 5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8 아래 문항들은 귀하의 전체적인 연애 관계 만족도가 페이스북 관계 상태를 "연애 중"으로 올린 후 어떻게 달라졌는지 측정하기 위한 문항들입니다.
귀하와 가장 잘 맞는 대답을 각 문항 당 하나씩 선택해 주세요.

	전혀 그렇지 않다	약간 그렇다	어느 정도 그렇다	주로 그렇다	거의 대부분 그렇다	완전히 그렇다
1. 나는 내 애인과의 페이스북 관계 상태를 "연애 중"으로 하고 난 후, 하기 전보다 관계에 대한 행복함을 더	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

느낀다.						
2. 나는 내 애인과의 페이스북 관계 상태를 "연애 중"으로 하고 난 후, 하기 전보다 내 애인과의 유대감이 더 강해졌다.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. 나는 내 애인과의 페이스북 관계 상태를 "연애 중"으로 하고 난 후, 하기 전보다 내 애인과 더 따뜻하고 편안한 관계를 가지게 되었다.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. 나는 내 애인과의 페이스북 관계 상태를 "연애 중"으로 하고 난 후, 하기 전보다 내 애인과 헤어지는 것을 더 상상할 수 없게 되었다.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. 나는 내 애인과의 페이스북 관계 상태를 "연애	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

중"으로 하고 난 후, 하기 전보다 내 애인에게 거의 모든 비밀을 더 털어놓을 수 있게 되었다.						
6. 나는 내 애인과의 페이스북 관계 상태를 "연애 중"으로 하고 난 후, 하기 전보다 더 내 애인과 한 팀을 이룬 것 같다.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. 나는 내 애인과의 페이스북 관계 상태를 "연애 중"으로 하고 난 후, 하기 전보다 내 애인과의 관계에 대한 보람을 더 느낀다.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. 내 애인은 나와 페이스북 관계 상태를 "연애 중"으로 하고 난 후, 하기 전보다 우리 관계에 대한 나의 요구를 더 만족시켜주는 것 같다.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. 나는 내 애인과의 페이스북 관계 상태를 "연애 중"으로 하고 난 후, 하기 전보다 평소에 가지고 있었던 연애의 기대치에 더 부응하게 되었다.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. 나는 내 애인과의 페이스북 관계 상태를 "연애 중"으로 하고 난 후, 하기 전보다 관계에 대한 전체적인 만족도가 더 높아졌다.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

요약 (국문 초록)

연인관계에서 페이스북의 역할: FBO가 한국 청년들에게 미치는 영향을 중심으로

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SNS가 이성관계에 중요한 역할을 한다는 것은 확실하지만 이와 관련된 연구는 제한되어있다. 온라인 상에서 이성관계가 어떤 식으로 관리되고 어떻게 보여지는지, 그리고 이것이 이성관계 만족도에 어떠한 영향을 미치는지에 대한 정보는 부족하다. 페이스북은 SNS를 통해 이성관계의 상태(status)가 공유된 네트워크 안에서 어떻게 전달될 수 있는지에 대한 엄청난 혁신을 가져왔다. 본 연구는 이성교제를 하고 있는 한국의 미혼 남녀의 이성 관계 만족도가 페이스북 사용을 통해 어떻게 변화하는지 혹은 페이스북 참여 정도와 관계 노출 정도에 따른 관계 만족도 변화가 있는지 깊이 있게 살펴보고자 했다.

이를 측정하기 위해 저자는 한국의 미혼 남녀 중 현재 페이스북 계정이 있고 페이스북을 통해 공개 연애 혹은 Facebook Official(FBO)을 한 적이 있는 남성과 여성 각각의 이성 관계 만족도와 공개 연애 후 관계 만족도의 변화, 페이스북 속 관계 정보 노출 정도, 그리고 상대방과의 참여/정보 노출 유사성 분석을 실시하였다.

그 결과 페이스북을 통해 공개 연애를 하는 남녀가 그렇지 않은 남녀보다 관계 만족도가 높은 것으로 나타났다. 한편, 페이스북을 통해 공개 연애를 하는 남녀 사이에서도 관계 만족도의 차이가 있는 것으로 나타났

다. FBO를 하는 여성보다 남성이 페이스북을 통해 공개 연애를 하기 전보다 후에 관계 만족도가 높아진 것으로 나타났다. 또한 남성은 페이스북에 공개적으로 이성 관계 정보를 많이 공유하면 할수록 관계 만족도가 높아지는 것으로 나타났다. 하지만 여성에게는 페이스북의 참여 정도가 이성 관계 만족도에 큰 영향을 미치지 않았다. 또한 페이스북에 올리는 이성 관계 정보 노출의 정도가 상대방과 유사한 경우 남성은 관계 만족도가 높아지는 것으로 나타났지만 여성에게는 큰 차이가 발견되지 않았다.

본 연구를 통해 한국 미혼 남녀들의 이성관계의 만족도가 페이스북이라는 SNS를 통해 변화할 수 있음을 확인할 수 있었으며 이러한 변화가 성별에 따라 다를 수 있음을 확인할 수 있었다. 끝으로 저자는 본 연구의 의의와 제한점을 논하였다.

주요어 : 페이스북, 페이스북 사용, 이성 관계 만족도, 성차, 참여 정도, 참여 유사성, 이성 관계 정보 노출 정도

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